

# **TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MONTHLY MEETING**

**December 14, 2015**

## **I. ROLL CALL**

The regular monthly meeting of the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 4:00 PM on Monday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Those members in attendance were Mr. Ward Bucher, Chair; Mrs. Marsha Kacher, Vice Chair; Ms. Cynthia Schmidt, Mr. Robert Amdur, Dr. Dorothy Fenwick, and Mr. Robert Mueller. Representing the County was Mr. Jeremy Rothwell.

## **II. CURRENT BUSINESS**

- A. REVIEW MINUTES OF THE November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015 MEETING - The minutes of the meeting on November 9<sup>th</sup> were reviewed. Ms. Marsha Kacher recommended that the minutes be approved as amended to account for three minor typographical errors. The motion was seconded by Mr. Robert Mueller and unanimously approved by the TCHPC.
- B. MHT CULTURAL RESOURCES HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that MHT has recommended that Talbot County receive \$60,000 to document historic structures within the villages of Tilghman, Bellevue, Royal Oak, and Newcomb. However, Mr. Rothwell stated that MHT recommended that the scope of work and deliverables be revised. Specifically, MHT has requested that we complete district survey forms for each of the four villages including photographs and addresses for all of the ‘contributing structures’ within each of the said villages. Additionally, MHT has requested that we use a new hazard mitigation form to document those contributing structures within each of the before-mentioned villages. Since this is a new form, Mr. Rothwell explained that he contacted a consultant who has completed similar hazard mitigation work for Talbot County in the past to gauge the potential per-form cost. The consultant, ERM based in Annapolis, gave a rough estimate of \$650 per form. Based on this information (and past RFPs), Mr. Rothwell estimated that with the \$60,000 grant, the TCHPC would be able to complete four district survey forms, approximately 25 MIHP forms (of designated contributing structures in said villages), and approximately 30 hazard mitigation forms (also of contributing structures in said villages). Jen Sparenberg from MHT stated that she was comfortable with these calculations, and has forwarded our application on to the National Park Service for further review. Mr. Rothwell noted that we may have to advertize for two RFPs; one to complete the district survey forms, and another to complete the hazard mitigation forms, since there may not be many firms or individuals who are qualified to document both for historic/cultural resources and for hazard mitigation. Mr. Ward Bucher noted that he thought that the hazard mitigation form would be the cheaper of the two forms. In speaking with Ms. Jen Sparenberg, Mr. Rothwell stated that while a Certified Floodplain Manager would not be required to contract for the hazard mitigation forms, that the selected consultant would have demonstrate appropriate past experience. Ms. Marsha Kacher asked as to what the timeline for completing the grant is? Mr. Rothwell stated that fortunately MHT has extended the deadline from January 2017 to September 2017, which would give us more

time in the event that we decided to advertise for two RFPs. Lastly, Mr. Rothwell explained that as soon as he hears back from MHT that NPS has completed their review and approved our grant award, that he would begin putting together the RFP.

- C. BILL 1305 PRD LEGISLATION UPDATE - Mr. Jeremy Rothwell gave a brief update on the legislation, explaining that the re-crafted draft legislation (Bill 1323) was introduced on October 27<sup>th</sup>. A public hearing was held on Tuesday, November 24<sup>th</sup> on the legislation at which time the applicants offered a serious of last-minute amendment to the legislation. The County Council decided to defer voting on the bill until staff had time to review the proposed amendments, and make a recommendation(s) back to the Council. The County Council has not rescheduled a date to re-hear the legislation. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell stated that he will continue to keep the HPC informed as to any upcoming public hearings and amendments to the legislation. Mr. Rothwell stated that the proposed changes are relatively minor in nature related how much of the building height (and what portions thereof) can exceed 40 ft.
- D. WYE HOUSE FARM (T-54) SITE VISIT – Mr. Ward Bucher stated he and Mr. Robert Mueller conducted a site inspection of the Wye House Farm on November 19<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Bucher noted that no major violations were discovered as part of the site inspection, and explained that he was very impressed with the maintenance and quality of upkeep that the Tilghmans have done. Related to this, Mr. Rothwell stated that the property owners received an administrative variance for the those improvements within the Shoreline Development Buffer at the November Planning Commission meeting, and that they are scheduled to go before the Board of Appeals in February to obtain approval for those improvements outside of the Shoreline Development Buffer. As a reminder, the applicants will be coming back to the TCHPC after they obtain approval from the Board of Appeals, and as part of the building permit process.
- E. MD ROUTE 404 DUALIZATION SECTION 106 REVIEW – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that he has continued to pass along the emails he has received from SHA regarding the ongoing review of historic and cultural resources to be affected by the highway construction project. It seems that no historic structures in Talbot County will be destroyed or negatively affected by this project. Ms. Cindy Schmidt noted that one MIHP property in Talbot County will lose three to four acres to accommodate a stormwater management pond, but explained that the historic house was already demolished. In addition, Mr. Rothwell noted that he also passed along the Section 106 review that was completed for the replacement of culverts in the village of Tilghman, but no historic or cultural resources would be affected.
- F. JOHN WESLEY PRESERVATION SOCIETY AND CHURCH – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that he arranged a site visit to the property with Mr. Michael Day, Deputy Director of MHT, and Mike Mertaugh regarding the applicant's request for an exemption for both ADA accessible parking and bathroom. Mr. Rothwell further explained under the amended National Historical Preservation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) has the legal authority to recommend an exemption to any or all portions of ADA requirements. Mr. Rothwell relayed from Mr. Day that ADA exemptions are only rarely granted, and that in this case, the applicants would be required to provide ADA-accessible parking. Additionally, Mr. Day recommended that the existing oyster shell access circle be

replaced by a white tar and chip (which would emulate the appearance of oyster shells), since oyster shells would not qualify as a 'hardened surface' under the ADA requirements. Mr. Rothwell stated that while the property is not a Talbot County Historic District, it does have an easement on it through MHT, and the improvements would require MHT approval. Mr. Rothwell stated that he would pass along the MHT review hearing for the project in the event that any of the commissioners would be interested in attending.

### **III. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. UPCOMING SITE VISIT TO OTWELL (T-164) – Mr. Robert Amdur explained that Otwell Farm is next on the list of properties to conduct a site inspection. A discussion ensued as to the date and time that would work best for HPC members. Mr. Ward Bucher recommended that the site visit be postponed until January given the approach of the holiday season. Mr. Robert Amdur also noted that Doncaster was recently sold, but he has not found out who the new owners of the property are. Mr. Rothwell stated that he would look up on the SDAT website what the names of the new property owners are. It was decided that the site visit would occur on Monday, January 18<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell reminded the TCHPC is restricted to having three commissioners go out on the site visit to avoid having a quorum.
- B. PROPOSED CLG PROCEDURES MANUAL – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that he recently met with Heather Barrett and Casey Pecoraro from MHT on November 20<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Rothwell explained that he shared what documentation work that the TCHPC has completed or are in the process of completing. Mr. Rothwell went on to note that he discussed the new 'Under Represented Communities' grant through NPS with Ms. Barrett, and the possibilities for an application in Talbot County. He noted that the grant would likely not fund the documentation of single properties, like the Ivytown Church, but rather being able to document or establish a context for an entire African-American (or other minority) community. While Ivytown is a traditional African-American community, most of the historic structures and dwellings have been demolished. Mr. Rothwell noted that Uniontown, Bellevue, and Copperville (all African-American communities) were all documented in the 1970's and 1980's. Mr. Rothwell reminded the TCHPC that the deadline for CLG grants is coming up in February, and requested that the commissioners think about what projects Talbot County should apply for granting for. Mr. Ward Bucher questioned what projects are eligible for funding under the CLG grant program? Mr. Rothwell explained that in the past CLG grant funding has been used to document structures/resources using the MIHP form, nominating a structure/resource onto the National Register, or most recently for funding the writing of a local 'agricultural context.'
- C. EASTERN VILLAGES RFP - Mr. Ward Bucher questioned as to the status of the documentation of commercial and public buildings in the eastern villages as he was under the impression that it was to be completed by the first of the year. Mr. Rothwell explained that the documentation work was required under the terms of the contract to be completed by the end of the fiscal year (June 30<sup>th</sup> 2016). Mr. Rothwell went on to say that unfortunately while he recently spoke with Ms. Beckley, he does not really have anything to report. He noted that he has not received any draft forms or material related to the documentation work that has been completed thus far. Mr. Rothwell relayed that Ms. Beckley would not complete the work for another two to three months at least,

although she did agree to make a public presentation to the County Council or any other forum as required. Ms. Dorothy Fenwick recommends that a letter be sent to Ms. Beckley requesting that a formal update on the project, including any draft MIHP forms, by the March meeting of the TCHPC. Mr. Rothwell stated that he would draft and send a letter to Ms. Beckley prior to the next meeting.

- D. BONFIELD MANOR TENANT HOUSE DOCUMENTATION – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that was contacted by Ms. Courtney Chapin who is interested in obtaining an exemption to the Talbot County Floodplain Ordinance, which would require the dwelling to be raised. Mr. Rothwell explained that the ordinance permits property owners whose dwelling is listed either on the National Register, the Talbot Historic District, or through MIHP to obtain an exemption. The tenant house, which was supposedly constructed in the 1820's has not been documented, so Mr. Rothwell has put the owner in touch with Paul Touart, who has agreed to document the structure. This would enable the property owner to obtain an exemption from raising the dwelling.

#### OPEN FLOOR

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will tentatively will held on Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm in Conference Room #1.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 5:05 pm.